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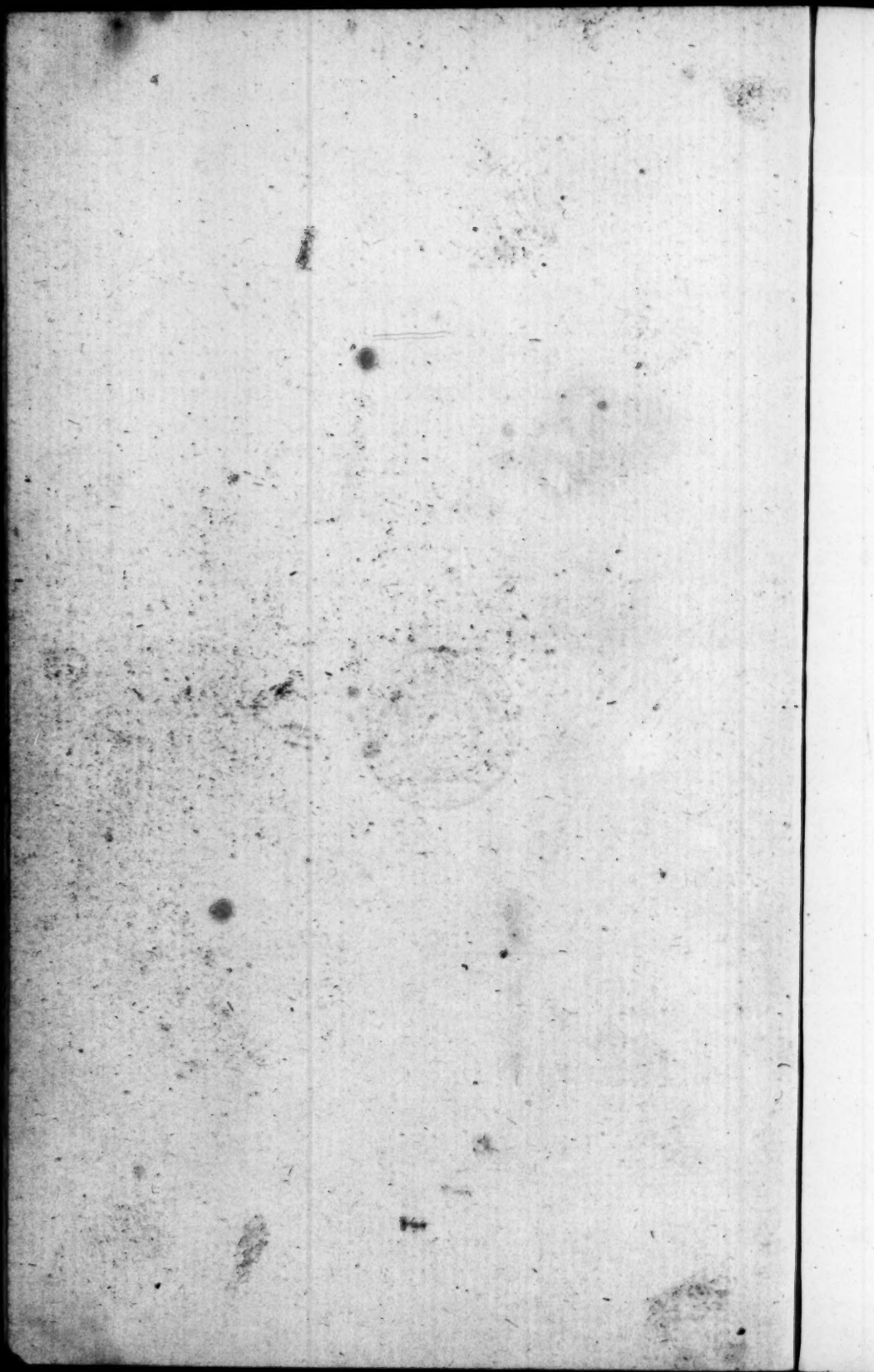
AN
HEROIC EPISTLE,

FROM

PEGGY MULLCAHY

TO

ÆSCULAPIUS.



A N

HEROIC EPISTLE.

MUST I, in silence, still lament,
My Tommy's loss, must discontent,
Still rack with doubts, my constant mind,
And Tommy still remain unkind?

In vain I would new joys procure,
In vain in absence seek my cure,
No ease by day, no sleep by night,
My Tommy, Tommy, still in fight,
Thro' all my schemes and all my views,
His dear, dear image, still pursues.

Shall I, depriv'd of all my blifs,
Read Mirah's tale to gentle Twiss,
Or Cutadash, with rapture fir'd,
Her Oroonoko still admir'd;
Have they more love, more truth than I,
Or must I pass my Tommy by?
No; 'spite of all that gives me pain,
And 'spite of tears that flow in vain,
In spite of all the wrongs I feel,
And spite of *Gub*, and *curs'd profile*,
I still, my constant heart shall prove,
Still sing the praise of him I love.

Sure lover, never yet could claim,
So pure, so chaste, refin'd a flame,
Tho' Eleise, in strains harmonic,
Declar'd her love was true Platonic,

Not

Nor ceas'd her flame for him to burn,
 Who never could her love return;
 What tho' no tyrant's bloody hand,
 Did execute a dire command,
 Yet tyrant nature, full as hard,
 Has made my Tom an Abelard.

Oh, curs'd the hour, and curs'd the thought,
 That first on Tommy's senses wrought,
 And made him change his Peggy's love,
 For that which ev'ry hour must prove,
 The sad, sad folly 'tis to fix,
 On twenty-one at fifty-six.

Ah! why did you, my love, engage,
 In such a task, at such an age?
 Can you forget, my gentle Tommy?
 'Ere cruel fortune snatch'd you from me.
 When you and I, retir'd for bliss,
 Wou'd sometimes toy, and sometimes kiss,
 How in the op'ness of your soul,
 You spake your mind without controul,
 Wou'd curse that matrimonial chain,
 The cause of all your grief and pain,
 And swear, if once luck set you free,
 How all your thoughts should turn to me,
 In course of things, how well you knew,
 What stores of bliss we had in view.

Then having stoutly cross'd the fire,
 And work'd your manly thoughts up higher,
 With skirts drawn up on either side,
 The hearth-stone boldly to bestride,
 Then fiercely plucking up your britches,
 You speak of power, fame, and riches.

Ay,

" Ay, let the world say what they will,

3 " There's none would dare dispute my skill,

" And as to fortune, God 'tis such,

" No man in town can boast so much;

" For, tho' I do not care to shew it,

" Some mighty men will shortly know it,

" Nor is that all I have in store,

" I'll tell my Peggy something more :

" What thinks my girl? should you see,

" The proud Rescinders bow to me,

" And, 'spite of all the zeal they've shewn,

" I be the member for this town;

" Let them go on in their own way,

" I know what's what, as well as they;

" But times will shortly come about,

" When I can turn the right side out.

" And, as for little Master Bush,

" I don't regard one single rust,

" What all his friends can say of me,

" I think myself as good as he.

" And you, my love, shall in your turn,

4 " Make some grand dames with envy burn;

" Ev'n Ormond's queen, with all her pride,

" Shall condescend, when you're my bride,

" In chearful mood, at my command,

" To take my Peggy by the hand,

" While thus my love each visit pays,

" In chariot gilt, with cock-rail greys.

" But e're these happy days arrive,

" My dearest Peggy, we must strive

" To manage all our parts so well,

" That not a soul in town shall tell,

" The

" The part that I intend to act,
 " To you alone, I trust that fact ;
 " For if those curs'd Rescinders knew,
 " What future schemes I have in view,
 " 'Tis ten to one, but they'd prevail,
 " And I, and all my projects fail.

" But, I've two useful fellows by me,
 " Who ever studious to supply me,
 " With all the news they hear in town,
 " For which they ramble up and down,
 " And sponge, and pimp, and lie, and flatter,
 " Until they find the subject matter,
 " Of what those watchful wise ones say,
 " Then streight to me the news convey ;
 " And tho' the town may think them asses,
 " They seldom fail to know what passes,
 " For Gub your friend, you know him well,
 " Can curse and swear, and lie like hell ;
 " And shou'd young Jack their anger feel,
 " We'll make him cut them in profile.

" Then, dearest Peggy, be content,
 " Until this long, long wish'd event,
 " Which must in little time take place,
 " † She having almost run her race ;
 " Yet, notwithstanding all I've said,
 " By G--d, I do not wish her dead,
 " Tho' some good friends of her can say,
 " That all her worth was thrown away ;
 " That elegance did badly suit
 " The rough ill-breeding of a brute.
 " But don't you know, my love, she's useless ?
 " She's old, she's ugly, sick, and fruitless,

" While

† His first wife.

“ While you, my Peggy, young and fair,

“ Would bless your darling with an heir.

Thus, thus my Tommy spake his love,
While I unthinking did approve.

Ah ! what strange project first inclin'd

My Tommy thus to change his mind,

Adopt a plan, which now I see,

Must ruin him as well as me ?

Did I not all my art employ,

To shew how much I did enjoy ;

Love's mock embrace without remorse,

My Tommy's pride, and hobby-horse ?

How oft with smiles and rapture too,

I've prais'd those fates you could *not* do,

And seem'd with extasy to melt,

At joys I *never, never* felt ;

And then, when parting, how my fears,

Burst forth in plaintive sighs and tears ;

But soon as I this gauntlet run,

I finish'd what you'd left undone,

At all times studious to take care,

My Tommy should not want an heir,

An heir, Oh word of such delight !

It brings my Tommy back to fight ;

Methinks I see him in his chair,

While little prattlings, fat and fair,

In playful sport, surround his knee,

With dady, see ; no, dady, me,

And pleasure still on pleasure grown,

As happy full as if his own.

But, oh sad, sad reverse of fate !

How changed, my love, from what so late

With

With chearful vapour fill'd your mind,
 When you were pleas'd, and I was kind !
 No public praise, no compliment,
 Shut out from power, from parliament,
 In doleful dumps, with arms crost,
 You now lament your honours lost ;
 No heir, your fortune to inherit,
 Your wisdom, courage, or your merit ;
 In vain, your Mary, you adore ;
 In vain, prescription, and *Tramore*,
 Even hope, seems turned to despair,
 And all your views dispers'd in air.
 Yet false and fickle as thou art,
 To see thee thus, it grieves my heart,
 In ev'ry stage, in ev'ry trim,
 The sportive butt of fortune's whim,
 Still striving on that plan to hit,
 For which on earth you're most unfit.

To what strange wight can I compare
 My Tommy, dress'd *en militaire*,
 With bayonet slung, and knot on shoulder,
 Not Hercules himself look'd bolder ?
 Full sure the ladies must admire,
 When you spake out, *present*--give fire.

Oh lost, for ever lost, I see !
 Lost to yourself, to sense, and me,
 All future hopes are now in vain,
 And nothing left, but grief and pain.

